

Who are the Incentive Federation's members?

The Incentive Federation is the only organization whose membership and leadership includes all the industry's national trade associations, as well as individual industry companies. It is under The Incentive Federation umbrella that the collective interests of the Incentive Marketing Association (IMA), the Promotional Products Association International (PPAI), The Incentive Research Foundation (IRF), the Recognition Professionals International (RPI) and Society for Incentive Travel Excellence (SITE) are advanced.

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Coronavirus Emergency Dramatically Affects Many Industry Companies and Organizations

The emergence of the COVID-19 virus worldwide has surely presented many challenges to our industry's companies and to their customers. From the disruption in manufacturing sectors, the scarcity of products to postponement and cancellation of events and meetings, these dramatic changes have led to much uncertainty about the economic impact this pandemic has and will cause to this industry and to the daily lives of everyone.

The Incentive Federation will not attempt to make any predictions about the future impact on business or to comment on the measures that should be taken to protect one's well-being. We can only advise everyone to stay abreast of the breaking news as it is revealed, listen to the health experts and use caution to avoid spreading or contracting the virus.

Incentive Industry Calendar Launched as Service

The Federation is attempting to keep track of the many changes to the meetings, conferences and events that our industry professionals typically attend due to the COVID-19 pandemic. To that end, as mentioned in a previous IFI Bulletin, we are launching an Incentive Industry Calendar that hopefully captures and details many industry events throughout this year and into next year. We are wanting this calendar to include as many of the meetings and events that our members believe are important to their success, including industry events that organized by many different organizations and companies.

We welcome your suggestions, urge you to let us know if and when you are aware of any changes to the events included in the calendar, and encourage you to recommend events we may have overlooked. We plan to have this calendar, which can be updated daily as needed, on the Incentive Federation website at www.incentivefederation.org. For now though, we invite you to click **The Incentive Industry Calendar** to access the calendar and note what events and meetings have been postponed or cancelled and which ones are still scheduled, at least in the short term. Remember to bookmark and check the calendar regularly to discover any changes.

As mentioned, please email or call us (contact info at the end of the newsletter) and let us know if we need to add, delete, or change any details about events the calendar includes.

A shout-out is due to Rick Low, CPIM, Vice President for Special Markets for Citizen Watch Company of America and an IFI Board Director, for his suggestion to develop such an industry calendar as a Federation service and for his company's sponsorship of the digital application we're using.

Incentive Federation Approved as Standards Developer for Incentives, Rewards and Recognition by ANSI

As covered in previous IFI Bulletins, the Incentive Federation had applied with the American National Standards Institute in June 2019 to become the Accredited Standards Developer (ASD) for the Incentive, Rewards and Recognition industry. We've been informed that ANSI has approved our application after several months of vetting as is typical with such applications. The IFI soon will begin recruiting U.S. industry experts to participate on standard development projects and assist in forming, crafting and developing standards for approval, and we intend to lean heavily on our IFI members who wish to participate.

Previous Bulletins have summarized the reasons for the IFI to pursue standards development and the IFI Board believes the industry has a lot to benefit from the implementation of standards in the coming years. In summary:

Standards are:

- Documents that provide a collection of best practices, guidelines, customs, experiences, and practical solutions to guide organizations on a topic
- Collaboratively and voluntarily developed through consensus
- Regularly revisited and revised

Standards are not:

- Regulations
- Laws
- Necessarily "how to implement" documents
- Certifications
- Individual organizational policies and practices

The benefits of creating standards for incentives, rewards and recognition are:

1. Improves implementation of programs within organizations
2. Permits "apples to apples" performance comparisons between programs and providers
3. Reduces the cost of program start up, operations, and guides use of resources
4. Further confirms incentives, rewards and recognition as a "profession" or discipline that helps businesses become more successful and profitable
5. Establishes common terminology and metrics for an industry
6. US federal law requires federal regulators to defer to existing industry standards. An executive order also encourages federal agencies to use industry standards rather than make its own rules.

A very practical example that most industry practitioners are familiar with is the development and implementation of safety incentive programs. In past years the Occupational Safety and Health Administration posed some very negative views about many safety incentive programs, and it's taken years of dedicated advocacy to persuade OSHA that properly designed safety incentive programs can reduce job injuries and deaths, improve worker health and productivity and contribute positively to a company's bottom line.

If industry standards had been in place in the early 2000s, it's likely that OSHA would have looked to our industry as a model and would have accepted the principles for the design and use of safety incentive programs. The same can be said for health and wellness programs and even for the guidelines that govern employee achievement awards and the tax preferences for which our that the industry has long lobbied.

Stay tuned for future developments as we continue the industry standards initiative. The IFI Board of Directors will hold its first quarterly conference call on March 23, 2020, to discuss the next steps in this long-term project.

Upcoming Webinars

IMRA Webinar:

Five Ways to Use Social Media to Benefit Your Business

Wednesday, March 25, 2020

Noon – 1:00 pm EDT

Presenters:

David Boodey, CPIM, President, RepLink/The DataDirect Group

Ione Terrio, IMA Marketing & Communications Director

This webinar is free and for IMRA members only. Registration closes Tuesday, March 24. Register [here](#).

PPAI Webinar:

The Top Five Things Suppliers Wish Distributors Knew

Wednesday, March 25, 2020

2:00 PM – 3:00 PM EDT

Presenter:

Penny Leadbetter, Owner and President, C. Sanders Emblems

For registration, click [here](#).

RPI Webinar:

Increase Your Emotional Intelligence (EQ)

Thursday, March 26, 2020

1:00 PM – 2:00 PM EDT

Presenter:

Anne Loehr, Center for Human Capital Innovation

For registration, click [here](#).

Please Re-new Your IFI Membership Today!

Thanks to all the IFI members who have sent their 2020 renewal membership payments! We appreciate your promptness.

If you haven't renewed your 2020 Incentive Federation membership yet, please do so today. Misplaced your 2020 pledge invoice emailed to you in January or want to upgrade your membership to a new level? Contact Steve Slagle at steves3309@gmail.com or call 864-710-6739.

2020 IFI Board of Directors

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If you have questions, advice for the Board, or want to raise issues for the Board to think about, please contact Steve Slagle at steves3309@gmail.com or 864-710-6739.